masters, not a servile attempt to imitate. The cool silvery grey key of the work is in excellent keeping with the conception: as a whole, it is a performance of which any country might be proud at any time.

(165) "Simchath Torah"—The Rejoicing of the Law. A large and finely-painted portrayal of this ceremony, in which Mr. Hart, R.A., shines to more than usual advantage.

(95) "A Cherry Seller," T. Webster, R.A., an every-day episode, susceptible of all the exquisite peculiarities of this emulator of great Dutchmen: the extreme nicety with which the fruit, vegetables, and objects of still-life are represented form but a secondary source of marvel, to the delicious character and expression of the figures. A devotion to the study of nature, and appreciation of the peculiarities of Teniers, Ostade, and Gerard Dow have formed the basis of Mr. Webster's admirable style.

(169) "The Escape of Francesco Novello di Carrara, Lord of Padua, with his wife, from Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan," C. L. Eastlake, R.A. (a repetition, if we remember rightly), is an almost faultless specimen of drawing and careful laborious finish, but is wanting in energy and force of effect. (72) "The Good Samaritan," superlatively excellent in many respects, is flat and weak, and not equal to "Christ Weeping over Jerusalem."

(174) "Mercury sent to admonish Æneas," J. M. W. Turner, R.A. This mighty genius, after comparatively retiring, to live, as we thought, content with his glories achieved, bursts out anew in all the vigour of years gone by, and seems to determine on doing as much again as he has already accomplished, awaking like a giant refreshed. The fallacious MS. of the "Fallacies of Hope" continues to supply him with something to dream of, out of which he has shaped most gorgeous effects of light and air. The middle portion of this picture vies with anything he has ever produced: it is morning mist itself that so miraculously refracts and spreads the light.

(189) "A Dialogue at Waterloo" is a striking specimen of the power over material of Edwin Landseer, likely in itself to constitute a lasting testimony of greatness. It is imbued with unmistakeable Flemish character. The group of peasants to the left, with all the objective matter, are painted as no one else could paint them: the insinuating *naïve* air of the vendor of curiosities (French eagle and identical bullets that Wellington fired at Bonaparte), as she, ignorant of the personage whom she addresses, expatiates on the victory, is excellent: the Duke seems to be pointing out some particular spot to the Marchioness of Douro. The old boor, who observes attentively the illustrious visitors, seems to have an indistinct knowledge of the face, which few forget. With all its excellence, however, the work is inferior to some productions of the same hand.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE DAY.*

BUT little use has been made hitherto of the Arabian and Oriental architecture generally; yet the light of genius and science is on much of it. Its authors have not paid any uniform obedience to nature, or had any steady guiding principle; but, being a highly poetical and imaginative people, and having thrown the reins upon the neck of their fancy, ever warm and active, a good deal of an elegant and gorgeous character, and many sublime effects, have been produced. Of some important principles of art they had no idea, but they have produced much picturesque grouping and combination, and, in their surface decoration, rich and graceful results. One source of ornamentation is suggested by this architecture which we have little drawn upon—the use of geometrical forms, in which there is a wide field for decorative design, and a very elegant and rational one. The Arabians brought their mathematical skill into great play in their decorations, and it was not absent from their constructive science. No style so full of geometrical figures, or more interesting to the geometrician. With such decoration we might still combine something of the material forms of nature, or we might take the latter as the basis, an abstract of such forms, most of which, in the hands of the real artist, are at least suggestive of grace, pregnant with beauty.

At the same time it should be understood that beauty of form, of general outline, and harmony of colour, is the great desideratum, and that profusion of ornament, as in the Moorish mosques, or in Henry VII.'s Chapel, is to be avoided. The eye soon wearies of such, and seeks repose. We want ornament, judiciously and tastefully applied; the more concentrated the greater its power, as it receives value from the adjoining plain surfaces. Small apartments, as rich cabinets, rooms seldom used, should alone receive this universal embellishment.

When these things are better understood, when we are more alive to the suggestions of nature and of foregone art, we shall have more variety of architectural form in our streets and towns, which do not at present exhibit, either in the plan or section of the houses, sufficient use of curvilinear terminations: circular, segmental, as well as octagonal, and other projections, in the nature of bows and bays, forming oblique angles with the front, give gradation of light and shadow: domes, vaulted and segmental roofs, might, in buildings of pretension, be more used exteriorly; and our increased resources, as regards material, may soon enable us to do so to some extent. Among other valuable qualities secured by the new railway shed at Liverpool, the beauty of its unique gable, and of the fine segmental sweep of its roof, should not be lost sight of: such forms give a happy and agreeable character to an architectural group or street. A curved object has the sun's rays falling on its surface at different angles, and hence an endless gradation, blendings of light and shadow, ever varying effects, reminding us of the natural landscape, and which no other means could ensure.

Now we are not to dispense with any beauty of form because the materials that time and usage have sanctioned will not produce it. The objections to the use of certain materials, I consider, are groundless. Nature, I may say Providence, has presented us with them. Why should we not use them? If we cannot execute a certain form in one material, we have a right to resort to another. Let our designs embrace the grandest and most beautiful forms which we can conceive, and let us construct them as we best can, and with what materials are to be obtained. Structural science is secondary and subordinate to design: we should not be cramped in design, because certain forms cannot be executed without the assistance of iron, or some other material not recognized among architectural appliances, or by the regular, or more mathematical, methods of construction. If the conception and design be fully executed, and that in a firm and substantial manner, and the building discovers nothing false, no parts that are useless either to the design or construction, it matters not what its structural attributes are, what latent means have been used to secure its firmness and durability. We have a right to avail ourselves of the discovery of new building materials, and the advancement of mechanical science.

Cast-iron ornaments have also been spoken against, and entirely denounced. Now, admitting the validity of many of the objections urged against them, I cannot but consider their use as defensible on certain conditions, and under certain circumstances. If it be done with judgment and moderation, it is justifiable, and will, moreover, serve to characterize the age. The advanced state of science, which puts such a practice into our power, we should surely so render available. Would not the ancients, would not the Lombards, the Venetians—whose works are so justly admired—have done so? If such ornaments exhibit mind and feeling, and they may exhibit both, it matters little how they have been produced, whether by the hand or by machinery. It is a limiting of man's rightful resources to restrict architectural ornament to what the hand can produce. Much has been done clumsily, without life and sentiment, in the way of ornament; and much has been overdone, through the facility of producing it; but its being produced by machinery does not necessarily imply its being lifeless: life and feeling may be conveyed, from the heart and head, through other vehicles than the hand; the spirit frequently evaporates in its passage through such vehicles, but it does not of necessity do so.

At some of the impediments to progress in architecture I have already glanced in the course of the preceding remarks, but there is one which, before I conclude, claims more particular notice, viz., the want of genuine criticism. Most of the criticism found in itineraries, in the literary department of works illustrating architecture, and in others of a similar nature, is written in Cimmerian darkness as to the true nature of art. Erroneous principles are disseminated and popular errors confirmed by these works. They may tell you whether the building under notice be conformable to some idea of the beautiful in their authors' minds, but whether it be true to the natural and eternal principles of art you must elsewhere discover; for, without referring to any received principle at all, they pass sentence upon the work, or perhaps arraign it before a tribunal which the architect does not acknowledge, and condemn it for wanting qualities which he may have studied to avoid. A building is sometimes "heavy," and is condemned for no other reason, when, in truth, heaviness was a necessary expression. The pseudo-critic is, of course, unaware that there are various orders of beauty, a beauty of the Doric, as well as of the Corinthian, of the Hercules, as well as of the Antinous. Proportions are frequently found fault with, just as unmeaningly:—one part is said to be too large or too small for another, when—which is sometimes the case—no law exists for adjusting their relative sizes.

There are critics that merely echo the public opinion, which is generally superficial, and at first incorrect: their writings do not guide, but sanction, public taste: as they follow in the wake of society, they are the least mischievous, perhaps, of any, though of course they foster prejudices: but alas for popular art-culture, if no better light be shed upon its path!

The best way to thwart the influence of false criticism is to waken the dormant faculties, and educate the æsthetic perception of the people, by the diffusing of art-literature, or rather by aiding and increasing its diffusion. On architecture, as one of the fine arts, more light should be generally shed among all classes. We want works upon it divested of technicalities, and in which the subject is popularly treated: not that every man may become his own architect,—such a result need not be apprehended: the technicalities concern only the artist, and power resides not in them; but there is a vital part which concerns every man, and the spectator should be taught, and enabled to commune with the artist, as with the poet, through the medium of his works.

This would be more easily accomplished, I think, than is supposed; at least, the educated part of the public would not be long in imbibing true principles of criticism. "A taste for architecture," as Schlegel observes, "seems to form the basis of every other artistic taste:" men are oftenest within the sphere of its influence; and it has a link, in the strength of its associations, that unites it to all. To none of the arts of design does association more tenaciously cling: than architecture, nothing is more powerful in evoking the spirits of the past, or fraught with recollections—which appeal to the loftiest feelings—of all that is great in the annals of our country and the world. History is said to be written in blood, and there is perhaps too much truth in the observation; an edition not less legible is, however, written on stone, and the footsteps of modern civilization may be traced on the great buildings of Europe, which record the history not only of nations but of families and individuals. Strange, but fascinating, are the feelings which have come over us whilst visiting some celebrated architectural relic—be it of "solemn temple or gorgeous palace:"—the deserted halls are inhabited still by shapes and shadows of memory. We wander from one apartment to another, communing with a past age, and feeling as if transported centuries back in time, and made one more actor or spectator in scenes long past away, but again brought up by the magic wand of art, and still present to the imagination.

But there are other evils to be deplored besides those arising from false principle in design. No design, however great its merit,

* See p. 209, *ante*.

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